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*Select Pleas in the Court of Admiralty.* Vol. II., 1547 to 1602, being Vol. XI. of the Publications of the Selden Society. Edited by REGINALD G. MARSDEN. (London: B. Quaritch. 1897. Pp. lxxxviii, 249.)

IN this second volume Mr. Marsden brings down the collection of Pleas in Admiralty through the reign of Elizabeth; and a summary is given of the main events in the history of the court to the end of the seventeenth century. His volumes give us our most authoritative information about the Court of Admiralty before the published reports of its decisions begin. The origin and history of the court have been briefly touched by Coke and the antiquarians, but for accurate knowledge we must now rely on Mr. Marsden.

In the introduction are discussed the history of the court during the later Tudor period, the disputes as to jurisdiction between the admiral and the seaports (emphasizing the medieval notion of jurisdiction as the right to take the profits of justice), the later disputes between the admiral and the common-law courts, resulting in the complete triumph of the latter, and a summary of the history of admiralty through the Stuart period. Mr. Marsden has formulated his conclusions after an exhaustive examination of the English records; they seem to have been carefully drawn, and are enforced by abundant citation of accessible though usually unpublished authorities. If his method can be criticized, it is for neglecting information that could be obtained from Continental sources. Consideration of such sources is of course quite beyond the scope of his work.

An interesting part of the introduction is the summary of cases not elsewhere printed or commented on. One thus gets an adequate notion of the general run of business in the court; and though a mere summary is sometimes tantalizing, one would after all rather know that a case exists, and where, than to know nothing of it. We cannot expect ever to get all the records printed in full.

Special investigation of interesting points has been made, as of prohibitions out of the common-law courts, and of the history of loss in cases of collision. The larger part of the book consists of a selection of decided cases, including a collection of early insurance policies of much historical value. Several of the cases are of especial value to students of international law. Here is a payment of the Sound Dues by giving up part of the cargo (p. 39); and a restitution without salvage of a vessel recaptured from pirates after long use by them (p. 99), though in another case salvage was awarded (p. 87). In a remarkable petition the court was asked to enforce an oral judgment of the king of France by which the English petitioner was given the right to take by way of reprisal goods owned in Little Brittany; the king could not himself deal with the Breton wrongdoer because of rebellion in those parts (p. 140). The right to search a ship under convoy was denied in a later case, cited in the summary (p. lxxxvi), but outside the period covered by the printed cases.

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